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MEXICO ELECTS ITS FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT IN 200-YEAR HISTORY

Left-wing leader Claudia Sheinbaum pulls off a landslide victory in a country plagued by rampant criminal and gender-based violence

PROTEGE OF OUTGOING PRESIDENT OBRADOR

The climate scientist and former Mexico City mayor won 58.6% of the votes. She is a protégé of incumbent leader Lopez Obrador, an anti-establishment leftist who had also won a landslide victory in 2018. Sheinbaum was a contributing author of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 | P12

AT LEAST 37 CANDIDATES MURDERED

- The elections were set against the backdrop of high levels of violence. At least 37 candidates were murdered during this election cycle
- Sheinbaum said her government will continue to rely on Obrador's policy of using the quasi-military National Guard to tackle the violence
- Her main rival Xochitl Galvez, also a woman, won 29% of the votes

October 1

WHEN CLAUDIA SHEINBAUM WILL BEGIN HER SIX-YEAR TERM

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

TIME FOR PEOPLE'S PULSE

Both BJP and Oppn I.N.D.I.A bloc optimistic, chalk out strategies for today's counting

PREETHA NAIR AND RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR
@ New Delhi

AFTER a gruelling 47-day electoral exercise, the country is set to get a new government when 64 crore votes for 543 Lok Sabha seats will be counted on Tuesday. The results will decide whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi will get a third consecutive term in power or the Opposition INDIA bloc will emerge as the winner.

Ahead of the counting day, the capital witnessed hectic parleys by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the INDIA bloc to chalk out strategies for the counting day. While the mood in the BJP camp is upbeat with multiple exit polls predicting a stunning victory, the Opposition is also upping the ante terming the exit polls as 'fake and manufactured".

Top BJP leaders got into a huddle here to reportedly discuss government formation and the expected seat haul. The meeting held at the residence of the party's national president J P Nadda for hours purportedly centered around the representation of allies in the new cabinet, sharpening the governance agenda, and strategising the outreach to realise the vision of *Viksit Bharat* (developed nation) of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It was held in the wake of the buzz on big-ticket reforms in the economic and defence sectors.

"The the party will celebrate the victory across the country as *Vijyotsava* for *Viksit Bharat*," a BJP source said. The saffron party also discussed ways to assert their dominance in the post-election scenario. Senior BJP leaders, including Union ministers Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh, participated.

Most of the exit polls predicted a comfortable victory for the NDA with 355 to 370 seats and between 125 and 140 seats for the Congress and its allies in INDIA. The exit polls also predicted significant gains for the NDA in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka.

However, the Opposition parties dismissed the exit poll as BJP's psychological game and asserted that the INDIA bloc would win 295 seats. On Monday, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi said the party is hopeful that the exit polls will be wrong. "We are very hopeful that our results are completely the opposite of what the exit polls are saying," she said.

The seven-phased Lok Sabha elections — the longest in Indian election history — has also seen many run-ins between the Opposition and the Election Commission of India.

Polling officials involved in preparatory work at a counting centre in Nagpur on Monday | PTI

COURTESY CALL, APPEAL, WARNING

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar meets Prime Minister Narendra Modi, JD(U) calls it a courtesy call
- Adhere to Constitution, don't get intimidated, Kharge urges bureaucracy
- UP DGP Prashant Kumar warns of strict action against those who attempt to disrupt counting

DECODE LS POLLS '24 DECIDE

Cong, BJP, JDS netas keep fingers crossed

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

WITH the stage set for declaration of results of the Lok Sabha elections today, leaders of Congress, BJP and Janata Dal Secular (JDS) are keeping their fingers crossed.

While the ruling Congress went to the polls with its guarantees, BJP wooed voters with the achievements of the NDA government at the Centre under PM Modi. JDS aligned with the saffron party.

The results will reveal whether people of the state have voted differently when compared to last year's Assembly polls. They will also reveal whether women, who constitute nearly 50% of the electorate, were swayed by Congress' guarantees or Modi's 'charisma".

For Congress, the stakes are high as its president Mallikarjun Kharge is from the state. Moreover, the ruling party has been at loggerheads with the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre on many issues. With Congress being the key player in I.N.D.I.A, it remains to be seen how many seats it will contribute to the bloc from Karnataka.

The Congress leadership in the state, however, is confident of winning 18-20 seats. But the exit poll prediction has dampened its spirits. DCM DK Shivakumar's prediction almost came true in the last Assembly polls. He is not sure how many LS seats his party will win in the state. He, however, predicted that Congress will win double-digit seats. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar rubbished Saturday's exit poll prediction. The last time the Congress secured double-digit seats in Karnataka was in 1999 LS polls when it won 18. P4

EXIT POLL IMPACT

Markets on steroids with highest single-day jump in three years

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

BUOYED by exit poll predictions of a comfortable victory for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP in the general elections, equity markets Nifty and Sensex went up by more than 3% on Monday, the highest single-day jump in three years.

The NSE Nifty 50 gained 733.20 points or 3.25% to settle at 23,263.90, while the BSE Sensex jumped 2,507.47 points or 3.39% to 76,468.70. During the intraday session, the Sensex peaked at 76,738.89 while the Nifty touched a fresh high of 23,338.70.

Investors raked in a whopping ₹14 crore in the bullish session as the market capitalisation of all listed companies on the BSE surged to ₹426 lakh crore from nearly ₹412 lakh crore in the previous closing session.

"The Indian stock market responded positively due to optimism about policy continuity," said Pranav Haridasan, MD and CEO at Axis Securities. He expects the market to remain bullish.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs), who were on a selling spree in May, bought shares worth ₹6,850 crore (net) on Monday.

Santosh Meena, Head of Research at Swastika Investmart, said if the exit poll results are validated, there could be further gains, with Nifty possibly advancing towards 23,500 and Sensex approaching 77,000.

The volatility index, India VIX crashed 15% to come back to the level of 20.94. A fall in this index indicates stability in the near term. India VIX measures volatility in the Nifty 50 over the next 30 days.

Analysts also attributed Monday's rally to India's GDP exceeding estimates at 8.2% for FY24, easing fiscal deficit and rise in GST collections. If the actual tally for NDA falls short of exit poll data, there can be a sharp profit booking. P13

BRS leader K Kavitha leaves the Rouse Avenue Court on Monday | PTI

ED: Kavitha's proceeds of crime valued at ₹293 crore

UJWAL JALALI @ New Delhi

THE Enforcement Directorate (ED), in a supplementary chargesheet filed against Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha in the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, said a total of ₹1,100 crore was laundered in the case and Kavitha was involved in proceeds of crime worth ₹292.8 crore.

"As per the investigation so far, the total proceeds of crime identified is ₹1,100 crore, out of which PoC of ₹292.8 crore is being dealt with in this Prosecution Complaint. Through activities of the accused persons i.e. Kavitha, Champreet Singh, Prince Kumar, Damodar Sharma and Arvind Singh, huge proceeds of crime have been generated," the supplementary chargesheet alleged.

As per the chargesheet, out of the ₹292.8 crore, ₹100 crore was paid as kickbacks to the Aam Aadmi Party leaders.

"Kavitha conspired with the members of the South Group and the AAP leaders through accused Vijay Nair (who was acting on behalf of top AAP leaders) to pay kickbacks to the tune of ₹100 crore and receive undue benefits," the chargesheet claimed.

Earlier in the day, special judge Kaveri Baweja extended Kavitha's judicial custody till July 3. The 46-year-old BRS leader is in judicial custody in the two cases lodged by the ED and the CBI in the alleged scam. The court had issued the warrants after taking cognisance of a chargesheet against the BRS leader in the case on May 29.

TAKING COVER

People cover their faces during a dust storm in Patna on Monday | PTI

NEXT LS POLLS BEFORE SUMMER?

Commenting on the heatwaves that killed at least 30 election workers, Kumar said it was a learning curve for the EC and it will consider wrapping up future elections before the onset of summer. "They shouldn't have been held in such hot weather... it could have been done earlier instead of in such heat," Kumar said

CEC seeks proof as Oppn alleges BJP attempt to influence counting

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar on Monday reacted sharply to Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's claims that the BJP tried to influence 150 district magistrates and collectors ahead of the vote counting on June 4, asking him to submit proof to back his claim by 7 pm on Monday. Ramesh alleged that Union home minister Amit Shah had called up 150 district magistrates after polling was over to influence the officials.

"You cannot spread a rumour and bring everyone under a cloud of suspicion," Kumar said. "Those leveling allegations should say which DM was influenced and we will punish them. They should tell us before the counting process begins," he added.

Ramesh sought seven days to submit his reply, saying, "We cannot put serving officers in jeopardy by putting a target on their backs". But the poll panel did not budge, and directed him to submt his response by 7 pm, failing which it would take action. The CEC said given that the district magistrates are also returning officers of their respective districts, such allegations have a direct bearing on the sanctity of the vote counting process.

Kumar admitted that the poll panel had failed to counter mischievous narratives. "We were prepared to deal with money power, muscle power, misinformation and model code violations. But we failed to anticipate mischievous narratives. It is learning for us," he said.

EXPRESS NEAD

Earthquakes strike north-central Japan

Tokyo: Earthquakes early Monday again struck Japan's north-central region of Ishikawa, still recovering from the destruction left by a powerful quake on January 1, but the latest shaking caused no major damage.

Ex-BrahMos engineer spied, gets life term

Nagpur: Former BrahMos Aerospace engineer Nishant Agarwal was handed life imprisonment for spying for Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI. He was accused of leaking sensitive technical information to Inter-Services Intelligence.

Two LeT terrorists killed in Pulwama encounter

Srinagar: In a major breakthrough, two terrorists of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), including a self-styled 'commander' who had been operating for the longest period, were killed in an encounter with the security forces in Pulwama of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said

Highway toll fares up by 5%

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE revised highway toll rates came into effect on Sunday midnight and motorists now have to shell out around 5% more. But for some highways where toll rates will be revised by September, the hike applies to others, including the Bengaluru-Mysuru access-controlled highway, in Karnataka.

For instance, if the toll fee was Rs 100, it will be Rs 105 or more from now on. Sources in the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) said the toll revision, which comes into effect from April 1 every year, was put on hold because of the Model Code of Conduct for Lok Sabha elections. P5

MASSIVE 111.1 MM

B'luru beats 133-yr record for one-day rain in June

MOHAMMED YACOOB
@ Bengaluru

SUNDAY'S 111.1 mm rain is the highest for Bengaluru in 133 years for a single day in June. It also surpassed the average rainfall for the month, which is 110.3 mm.

According to officials of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the previous record for a single day was 101.6 mm on June 16, 1891.

The officials predicted that Bengaluru and other parts of the state are likely to receive heavy rain in the coming days. The department recently forecast a good monsoon this year.

The officials said the weather station at HAL Airport recorded 47.7 mm rain on Sunday.

An uprooted tree lands on a car, damaging it, after a heavy downpour in NR Colony, Bengaluru, on Monday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

Bengaluru Urban district, excluding BBMP's limits, received 109.5 mm. Areas such as Electronics City recorded 38.5 mm and Sompura in Bengaluru Urban district received 30.5 mm rain on Sunday.

Experts attributed this to the impact of La Nina. The impact of El Nino, which resulted in a harsh summer, has reduced, they said.

The IMD officials said monsoon has already covered most parts of southern Karnataka, including Bengaluru. "Weather in Bengaluru will be generally cloudy with good spells of rain in the next three days. The city is expected to receive moderate rain with thunderstorms again on June 8 and 9," an official said.

Tumakuru, Chikkaballapura, Kolar, Chitradurga, Davanagere, Bengaluru Rural, Kodagu, Mysuru, Hassan, Ramanagara, Mandya, Dharwad, Gadag, Belagavi, Chamarajanagar and Vijayanagara districts are expected to receive heavy rain in the coming days, the officials said. P2

Pen drive case: HC seeks probe papers of accused

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE High Court of Karnataka on Monday issued an order to the Karnataka Government to place investigation papers related to the role of Sharath, an accused, in circulation of obscene pen drives allegedly involving Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna.

Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the order on a petition by Sharath stating that he has been dragged unnecessarily into the case based on a complaint filed at Hassan CEN police station by Poornachandra Tejaswi, election agent of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate Prajwal, against Naveen Gowda and others.

The High Court directed additional public prosecutor BN Jagadeesha to file objections and secure the investigation papers from the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the case and submit them before it on June 10.

When the petitioner's counsel stated that he is being harassed and hence, interim protection of stay can be granted, the court said that it has to see the investigation papers, before passing any interim order. P4